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DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 45/191 of 21 December 1990, entitled "Developing human resources for development". By means of that resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its forty-sixth session "on the implementation of the present resolution, including ways and means of strengthening his coordination of the activities of the United Nations system related to human resources development, as well as proposals for action by members of the international community further to promote and intensify cooperation in this field".

2. That resolution reflects two important concerns of equal relevance. In the first place, there is a widespread perception that social conditions are deteriorating in many parts of the world, and that children and women are exposed to special hardships. Secondly, there is a new and important realization that human resources are the key to development itself, and that spending for health and education is an essential investment in the future of any country. This realization is in turn part of the new emphasis on human development which can be seen as a process of enlarging not only individuals' capabilities but also their choices in many different areas - particularly economic, social, political and cultural.

II. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990s: THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

3. The end of the 1980s was a turning-point in the international approach to the development process. Human resources came to be viewed both as a chief instrument and a primary goal of development activities.

4. Most developing countries are still facing mass poverty. It has become apparent that four decades of development effort have not succeeded in solving the problems of economic backwardness and human deprivation.

5. In many respects, the industrialized countries have also wasted many development opportunities in the post-war period. They failed to foster a more stable and predictable international environment and to create favourable non-discriminatory conditions for international relations. They wasted gigantic resources in financing the arms race. They involved many developing countries in their ideological disputes and directly or indirectly contributed to regional and internal conflicts throughout the developing countries.

6. The environmental consequences of the policies of consumerism and the unfettered pursuit of economic growth have proved to be quite damaging. Degradation of the environment has in many places reached a point where the very existence of many life forms on the planet is threatened.

7. The population explosion in many parts of the world contributed to the environmental crisis. The carrying capacity of the environment is seen as overstretched in many developing countries, and if population growth does not slow down it might transform the present environmental crisis into a catastrophe in the near future. However, in the developing countries, environmental degradation cannot be stopped until the vicious circle, within which poverty has simultaneously been a cause and a result of the demographic and environmental crises, is broken.

8. The experience accumulated by the international community in dealing with the current social and economic crisis in most developing countries has also been an important factor in the reappraisal of approaches to development issues. In particular, policies of structural adjustment have been reviewed in order to take social aspects into consideration.

9. Finally, the fundamental changes in Eastern European countries and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the social costs of their transformation have played a significant role in reshaping international thinking about the development process.

A. "Development of the people, by the people, and for the people": 1/ the emergence of a new development thinking

10. That development is ultimately made by people themselves is obviously not a new discovery, but it has recently been more strongly emphasized. It is no exaggeration to say that recent development thinking, as reflected not only in the rhetoric but also in the policies of international organizations and of Governments, is different from earlier approaches in several respects. Firstly, it is recognized that major social problems, such as poverty, inequity, malnutrition and ill health cannot be solved merely on the basis of trickle-down approaches and that a genuine development process can be assured only by addressing socio-political, economic and environmental issues simultaneously.

11. Secondly, recognizing the people itself as a leading development agent means that democracy, participation and human rights are seen as essential for sustained and balanced development.

12. Thirdly, some consensus is being reached on the role of the private and public sectors in the development process. While the private sector is believed to be more dynamic and responsive to new demands and needs of society than the public sector, especially in terms of economic efficiency, the latter is viewed as the essential supplier of public goods, including macroeconomic stability, infrastructure and social justice.

13. This consensus was recently reflected in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade whereby Governments agreed on a common view of the international development effort, a common reading of the record, and a common philosophy. The Strategy stated that

"There is no universal prescription for successful development, but a growing convergence of views is emerging with respect to effective approaches to economic and social development and with regard to the potential contributions to the development process of the private and public sectors, of individuals and enterprises and of democratic rights and freedoms.

"... Human resources development, entrepreneurship and innovation, and the energetic application of science and technology, in a context of political freedom, respect for human rights, justice and equity, are all essential and relevant to growth and development". 2/

While the Strategy reflects some of the new priorities implied by the new emphasis on human resources, the task of translating the new approach into concrete and practical policies and meeting the needs of individual countries is only beginning.

14. The Strategy was adopted at a time when recent political developments had opened up the possibility of the United Nations assuming a more important role in the economic and social fields. Different suggestions have been made on ways and means of revitalizing the work of the Organization. 3/ For instance, the report of the Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance, Common Responsibility in the 1990s, that was issued in April 1991, 4/ contained suggestions for revitalizing the work of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. The Initiative re-emphasized several targets for the year 2000 on such human development matters as primary education, equality in education between boys and girls and child and maternal health. 5/ Similarly, the report of the South Commission, The Challenge to the South, issued in 1990, called both for increased investments by developing countries in human resource development, 6/ and for a reform of international institutions, arguing that "strengthening the role of the United Nations in the management of the world economy is a natural extension of its original mandate to preserve international security". 7/

B. The new development approach and donor policies

15. The desire of the developing countries to speed up the development of their human resources will be realized only if their own domestic efforts are redoubled, often by redirection of government spending. However, the process would be facilitated and speeded up if the donor community gives its wholehearted support.

16. The renewed emphasis on human development is in part a product of the profound political changes that have taken place in the last few years. At the international level, what was often a sterile debate over the ideal development model has been replaced by a more pragmatic approach: trying to improve the functioning of the existing world economic system. Attention is being directed to finding ways of ensuring that all countries and social groups within them benefit fully from economic progress and of achieving

closer integration of all countries in the system. 8/ The application of the Soviet Union to join the Bretton Woods institutions in July 1991 is an indication of that country's desire to be fully integrated into the international economy.

17. The more developed economies - in East and West - will less and less base their aid decisions on strategic criteria. Whereas in the past the extension of assistance to regimes that did not respect human rights and fundamental democratic freedoms could be justified as part of an ongoing global struggle between two opposing systems, it would now be very difficult for such assistance to obtain the approval of legislatures. Moreover, there are indications that a more common approach to development issues among developed market countries might emerge. In the European Community, there are pressures for closer coordination of the development cooperation policies of the Member States 9/ and also in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

18. Although the importance of human development is sometimes presented as a fresh discovery, this does a disservice to the concept itself in making it appear just another development policy that could subsequently be found inadequate. Rather, its importance, and the guarantee of its longevity as a guide to policy, lies in its lack of originality and its essential conformity to the basic tenets of a market-oriented system functioning in conditions of political freedom. Its roots stretch right back to the beginning of political economy as a separate field of study and to the fundamental question that the classical economists posed - "what really creates the wealth of nations?" - and the answers they gave. It appeared eminently sensible to the founders of modern economics that countries are now "opulent" both because they have educated and healthy populations, able to perform all the myriad tasks that the division of labour in a modern society requires, but also because they erected institutions that encouraged and enabled their citizens to engage freely in economic activity. 10/ Governments that spent large sums on "unproductive hands" or tried to enter too closely into economic management of enterprises were not advancing national welfare. 11/

19. The important point has been made that democracies tend to have smaller armies than other countries, and that a country's military spending can prevent it from investing adequately in human development policy. However, this is only one aspect of the importance of the difference in the form of society and in the development policy it pursues. In some countries, considerable numbers of people are employed in tracking down and arresting those who commit "economic crimes" which would elsewhere be considered legitimate business, and in enforcing bureaucratic regulations that restrain trade. The counterpart of this activity is the diversion of the efforts of the citizen towards overcoming the various legal and bureaucratic obstacles to what would normally be legitimate business. Moreover, the entrepreneurial spirit is itself dampened in the attempt not to run foul of the authorities.

20. The considerations described above were reflected in the Policy Statement adopted when Members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), joined by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) met in December 1989 at the level of Development Cooperation Ministers and Heads of Agencies. The Policy Statement was intended to guide their development cooperation policies in the 1990s and was put forward as a contribution to a dialogue among developed and developing countries. 12/ It affirmed that economic and development strategies and policies had to integrate

> "the objectives and requirements of promoting sustainable economic growth, enabling broader participation of all the people in the productive processes and a more equitable sharing of the benefits, and ensuring environmental sustainability and slowing population growth in those many countries where it is too high to permit sustainable development".

The Policy Statement emphasized the importance of human development and the interconnection between economic success and democratic freedoms:

> "investing in people is essential for economic growth and greater equity: higher priority is needed for making available, on the widest possible scale, sustainable and effective education and training, basic health care, and credit and advice for small farmers and entrepreneurs including women. ...
>
> "More active participation by women in the process of development at all levels is an essential element of sustainable, participatory development. ...
>
> "The transition from an economy which is stifled by over-regulation, and by powerful state and private monopolies, to an economy where the productive energies of people are motivated and can find legitimate expression is a complex challenge. There is a vital connection, now more widely appreciated, between open, democratic and accountable political systems, individual rights and the effective and equitable operation of economic systems. ...
>
> "Forms of development cooperation which contribute to more participatory decision-making include ... promoting cooperatives and similar associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) ...".

21. Aid policies were expected to be adapted "to help implement development assistance strategies along the lines set out in the Policy Statement". At the same time, this new orientation implied "significant investments in physical and social infrastructure" and the Policy Statement committed the donor countries to "seek to achieve further substantial increases in the aggregate level of aid". However, the "climate for more positive aid volume responses" would be enhanced by

> "the improvement of economic conditions (in the developed market economies), growing awareness among (their) publics of the interrelated problems of poverty, population growth and environmental degradation and the adoption of effective policies and programmes on the part of the developing countries to address these issues".

22. The aid policies of individual countries now incorporate criteria which reflect the Policy Statement. For instance, Canada is to focus on "environmentally sound development", and "human rights considerations will play an important role in deciding overall country eligibility". 13/ Denmark would place increasing emphasis on

> "the integration in the development process of environmental considerations, of women's interests, the promotion of respect for human rights and to expanded cooperation with non-governmental organizations". 14/

In a policy document, the Netherlands has explained that

> "the fight against poverty should be the main objective of Dutch development policy in the years to come. At the heart of (anti-poverty) policy are three strategic choices, which are interconnected. These are, firstly, investment in people, particularly the poor, in order to increase their productive capacity; secondly, an improvement in provision for basic needs; and thirdly, greater participation by the poor in the process of political decision-making, for example by strengthening local organizations".

On the question of bilateral aid, the policy document stated that one criterion for the selection of individual countries was

> "the level of agreement with their policies. This agreement relates both to economic policy and to socio-political policy, including policy on human rights, policy towards women, socially weaker sections of the population and minorities and policy on the environment". 15/

23. The Netherlands policy document was one of the most recent to analyse in depth the approach the Government wished to adopt to development cooperation. Governments in the developed market economies are re-examining their development policies and are in general agreement on the main elements. Similarly, the development philosophy of the developed market economies can be expected to be reflected in the positions that they take in the governing bodies of the United Nations specialized agencies and in the multilateral financial institutions, and to influence their voluntary contributions to the programmes and projects of these agencies.

24. The Development Committee (Joint Ministerial Committee of the World Bank and IMF on the Transfer of Resources to Developing Countries) has directly addressed two important issues that are part and parcel of human resources development: poverty reduction and enhancing the economic role of women in

development. At its last meeting, on 30 April 1991, the Committee agreed to discuss at its next meeting the development of human resources in developing countries. The concern with human resources development is increasingly being reflected in the agenda of the World Bank and the regional development banks. For instance, the Asian Development Bank (AsDB), following the recommendations of an external panel of development economists 16/ in 1989, re-examined and updated its operational policies in education, health and population. Financing of education projects in 1990 was almost triple the amount of financing of 1989. 17/ While no independent population projects have yet been financed, population components are part of projects in the health and population sector. The aim of advisory technical assistance in this sector has been to strengthen the procurement and management of medical equipment; prepare national health plans, health manpower and training plans; develop national hospital services development plans; and finance health studies. Assistance has also covered seminars on the use of rural health services and on the financing of health care.

C. Contribution of the United Nations institutions

25. The contributions of the United Nations system are of different kinds. In the first place, some agencies have issued influential reports which have attracted great attention and helped to steer the general agendas for development cooperation in new directions. Secondly, they fill an essential function in monitoring and assessing social development. Thirdly, in their operational activities they commit substantial resources to the support of human development.

1. The dialogue on human development

26. Many of the specialized agencies or bodies of the United Nations system are committed to one or another aspect of human development and have always tried to assert its priority in the development process. Yet a strong concern about the overall neglect of the human dimensions in development policy re-emerged in the context of the crises which afflicted many developing countries in the 1980s. Governments were forced into retrenchments and adjustments, in which budgets of health, education, and welfare were often the first victims, while at the same time the economic crises themselves tended to hit the poor and vulnerable groups. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched a major campaign to draw attention to the suffering imposed on children, mothers, women and on the poor in general. At other points in the United Nations system, and in the donor countries, the pressures multiplied, and within a few years, the policy programmes of international financial institutions responded. In the course of 1990 and 1991, important reports were also published by UNDP and the World Bank.

27. In 1990, UNDP issued its first Human Development Report which made an eloquent claim for a people-oriented approach to development and presented a tentative measure of human development, the "Human Development Index", which

showed that some rich countries were not doing well in literacy or health, while some poor countries were doing remarkably better than other equally poor countries. 18/

28. The principal theme of the Human Development Report 1991 was common efforts towards financing human development. The Report contained a tentative index of human freedom. It advocated stark cuts in military spending in developing countries. It also criticized the allocation of international official development assistance for its neglect of primary schooling, primary health and rural development. 19/

29. The Report emphasized the need, in many developing countries, for political reforms designed to enhance popular participation, and in particular to: (a) encourage democratic freedom; (b) invoke common interests; (c) compensate powerful groups, which may organize a resistance because of being affected by the reallocation of resources; (d) empower weaker social groups through a decentralization of decision-making; (e) improve access of the poor to credit; and (f) coordinate external pressure. 20/

30. In its World Development Report 1990 the World Bank examined the effectiveness of national policies with regard to development goals, including the reduction or elimination of poverty. Its findings suggest that the most effective policies have been those which encourage a pattern of growth that makes efficient use of labour, and simultaneous investment in the human capital of the poor. Stemming from the findings of the Report, the strategy which will guide the World Bank's efforts for the reduction of the number of poor in developing countries will be two-pronged: (a) encouraging broad-based economic growth to generate income-earning opportunities for the poor; and (b) promoting access of the poor to basic social services to combat malnutrition, ill health, illiteracy, high fertility and the lack of employable skills. According to the Report,

> "this two-part approach is the basic strategy for the reduction of poverty. Both elements are essential. The first provides the poor with opportunities to use their most abundant asset - labour. The second improves their immediate well-being and increases their capacity to take advantage of the newly created possibilities". 21/

31. The World Development Report 1991 was entitled "The challenge of development". 22/ It concluded that technological progress is a key element in development. Accordingly, the World Bank will support technology transfer to complement the two-part strategy mentioned above.

32. In many respects the recommendations of the World Bank are similar to those of UNDP. Both agencies believe that, in order to provide opportunities to the poor and to enable them to participate in growth, national policies have to be attuned to three broad tasks: (a) encouragement of rural development; (b) public infrastructure and services; (c) public investments and government subsidies for resource-poor but heavily populated regions where growth opportunities are limited. 23/

33. The World Bank, like UNDP, emphasized the need to rationalize social spending and recommended the developing countries to increase their investment in human resource development; and to improve the quality and composition of their human investments, switching resources from higher education towards primary education, and away from expensive curative health care systems to primary systems.

2. Monitoring human development

34. United Nations organizations have been heavily involved in the two important tasks of: (a) monitoring social development trends and (b) developing and improving social indicators.

35. United Nations specialized agencies as well as regional commissions continually watch developments in the social sectors that are their concern and conduct special studies on social problems at the request of Member States. The regular reports which they produce, often on an annual basis, have helped focus - and maintain - the attention of the international community on particularly acute issues and have advocated particular policies whose implementation would affect many aspects of human development. For instance, in The State of the World's Children, UNICEF argued from the evidence of deteriorating patterns in child health and welfare for "Adjustment with a Human Face". The agencies often provide a detailed analysis with the provision of statistics. This is the case, for instance, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Food Surveys and The State of Food and Agriculture, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), The State of the World Environment and the World Health Organization (WHO), Report on the World Health Situation.

36. Reports by the Secretariat include the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) of the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), with inputs from other concerned bodies within the system, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), State of the World's Population and the collaborative report of the United Nations Statistical Office, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA), DAW, UNICEF, UNFPA and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics.

37. In some cases the statistics almost speak for themselves and their issuance on a timely basis is essential for monitoring the overall world social situation. Such is the case, for instance, with the statistics published by the United Nations Statistical Office, FAO, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and WHO which are, in turn, used as inputs for those general reports on human development which were mentioned above. Moreover, the statistical services of the United Nations system produce a wide range of methodological outputs designed to foster the improved availability and comparability of social data for national and international monitoring purposes.

38. Within the Secretariat, the monitoring of global social development trends is done by DIESA and UNOV. DIESA produces every four years the Report on the World Social Situation, with an interim report two years later. 24/ DIESA also monitors and reports on population trends.

39. UNOV has responsibilities in many social areas, and has special programmes for the advancement of women, crime prevention and criminal justice, the family, youth, the disabled and the ageing. Its work goes beyond monitoring to providing assistance for the formulation of new international standards. Of particular importance are the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future. UNOV supports operational activities to strengthen countries' capacities in social policy and programme design, implementation and evaluation.

40. The results of the work of DIESA and UNOV in the social area are reported to the Economic and Social Council, normally through the Commission for Social Development, and subsequently to the General Assembly. Some work is reported directly to the General Assembly.

41. The United Nations specialized agencies have made significant contributions in developing social indicators. An important instrument for promoting this work is the United Nations Handbook on Social Indicators. During the past decade emphasis in this area has been on designing progress-oriented measurements of social conditions and standards of living and cross-sectoral indicators on population subgroups, such as women. General overviews have been undertaken, for example, in the International Agency Food and Nutritional Surveillance Programme sponsored by UNICEF, FAO and WHO. Another example of cooperation is the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)/Economic Commission for Europe/Statistical Office project on creating indicators for measuring the state of the environment.

42. Some United Nations organizations have been involved in developing model-based systems of integrated social indicators. Pursuant to recommendations of the First Regional Conference on Poverty, held in Cartagena, Colombia, in 1988, UNDP and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are undertaking a joint project of developing a system of social indicators for better measuring the incidence of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean. Other United Nations organizations have contributed to the project by providing indicators applicable to housing quality, access to primary schools and dependency ratios.

43. The United Nations Statistical Office, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO are collaborating in the development of an Inter-agency Programme to Monitor the Achievement of Social Goals which has been proposed to assist developing countries. In the initial phase of the programme, five missions carried out work on a pilot basis to assess the current availability of data that are relevant for social monitoring, specifically within the context of priority development concerns identified by the participating agencies in the context of their established mandates and internationally agreed indicators in specific fields.

44. In its discussion of social statistics and indicators at its twenty-fifth session, 25/ the Statistical Commission agreed that a concerted effort should be made in the United Nations system for the compilation of indicators to assess human factors and social impacts of development in connection with the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. 26/

45. This initiative is designed within the framework of arrangements for international coordination in statistics established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Statistical Activities. It seeks to ensure:

(a) Appropriate statistical capabilities and programmes at the national level, including data collection, processing, compilation, dissemination and analysis;

(b) Effective review and coordination of methods to select and define the indicators needed, and the development of underlying statistical methodologies to ensure the validity, comparability and timeliness of results;

(c) Analysis and dissemination of comparable indicators and supporting documentation at national, regional and international levels; and

(d) Effective mobilization and coordination of bilateral and multilateral resources for technical cooperation in statistics to support the full range of monitoring activities.

46. The Statistical Commission endorsed this initiative, at its twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth sessions, as part of its discussion of social statistics and indicators.

47. During the course of its discussion at its twenty-sixth session, the Commission agreed that the technical, organizational and policy challenges posed by monitoring requirements were formidable and that action on a major programme was timely and urgent. The adverse trends in human development in many countries in the past decade had drawn new attention to the need for better monitoring and indicators and demonstrated clearly that urgent action was necessary. New opportunities and new awareness of social concerns and disparities could support and sustain a sound monitoring programme. The Commission noted a number of regional activities and initiatives already under way which provided essential experience and momentum in the field of social statistics and indicators, such as the new annual social report on Latin America and the Caribbean, paralleling the annual economic report of ECLAC.

48. The Commission stressed that data-collection programmes and country capacities should not be overloaded nor should new programmes be undertaken which might duplicate, overlap or compete with existing ones. The Commission agreed that it was essential to select carefully priorities in statistical work and make the fullest use of data generated by the Nation Household Survey Capability Programme, the Demographic and Health Survey programme sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development, the Pan-Arab Project

for Child Development executed by the League of Arab States, the Inter-Agency Food and Nutritional Surveillance Programme sponsored by UNICEF, FAO and WHO and the Living Standards Measurement Study and Social Dimensions of Adjustment project, both executed by the World Bank.

49. The Commission discussed in detail the importance of coordination at three levels: between institutions within a country; among international organizations at the country and international levels; and between countries and international organizations. Those efforts should involve, inter alia, coordination and agreement in choice and technical specification of indicators for monitoring. The Commission noted with concern that national statistical services had to deal with a multiplicity of multilateral and bilateral agencies interested in statistical and monitoring issues, many of which dealt directly with other substantive ministries in their Governments. It recommended that the participating organizations in the social monitoring and evaluation effort should intensify their efforts to ensure the broadest possible national, regional and international participation in and contributions to the programme, consistent with ensuring focused priority on a limited set of indicators, and suggested that the participating organizations and countries should work together to ensure the greatest possible cost-effectiveness in data collection, tabulation and analysis for the desired indicators and in coordinated international social reporting.

III. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

50. In the recent past, the organizations of the United Nations system have substantially increased their human development efforts in the area of their competence. One important thrust of almost all operational activities, including field operations, has been the building of national capacities so that the projects or programmes will be self-sustaining. An important component of almost all projects or programmes is, then, training. This is sometimes made quite explicit when specific skills, such as those of air-traffic controllers or harbour-navigation pilots, are imparted. In other cases, the precise skills imparted are more difficult to identify. However, whenever a project or programme implies the transfer of technology, efforts are invariably made to enhance national capacities during the period of its operation.

51. For instance, within the Secretariat, a major component of the work of the United Nations Department of Technical Cooperation for Development is enhancement of the capacity of the national counterparts in the respective programmes or projects. This is done either directly or in conjunction with agencies of the system.

52. What follows is an account of the operations and activities of the agencies of the system, based on their own contributions to this report.

A. Current activities

1. United Nations Children's Fund

53. The Development Goals and Strategies for Children in the 1990s adopted by the UNICEF Executive Board address issues ranging from mortality and morbidity reduction, reduction of malnutrition, access to basic services in health and education, to attention to the needs of women and children in especially difficult circumstances. The World Summit for Children, held in September 1990, adopted the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s, aiming at the implementation of the Goals and Strategies. Especially salient are the following two major goals:

> "By the year 2000, universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school age children"; and
>
> "Reduction in adult illiteracy rate to at least half of its 1990 level with emphasis on female literacy".

54. Primary education is essential to child development. In 1990, the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, supported this premise; the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education and the UNICEF Executive Board adopted it. UNICEF is now guiding field staff to make effective the implications of the Jomtien Conference. A 10-year strategy to guide UNICEF country-based activities is under consideration and financial assistance is to be increased by some 300 per cent in the decade of the 1990s.

55. Following the UNICEF Executive Board's recommendations of 1991, the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education will address priority areas as follows: building a monitoring system, ensuring girls' and women's access to education, training and staff development, strengthening planning capacities, promoting innovative experiences, supporting child-care activities, undertaking a feasibility study of the mass provision of strategic inputs, and working jointly on the ethos and content of basic education.

56. Since the setting up of permanent means to achieve basic education requires costly and complex structures, UNICEF will support provisional approaches and temporary structures while countries supplement these efforts with non-formal schools and other modes of learning. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee is an example of an effective way of facilitating avenues for children's education.

57. Attention to the needs of girls will include incentives designed to attract young girls to schooling and to delaying marriage.

58. Programmes for early child development will involve the family and the community in preparing young children to profit from formal schooling and other places of learning.

59. As a follow-up to the World Summit for Children, Governments will prepare national programmes of action to implement the commitment to the survival, protection and development of children. In this regard, UNICEF is preparing guidelines to assist Governments in the development of their national programmes of action. The Joint UNDP/UNOV/UNICEF Human Development Country Initiative will assist in this endeavour, while it will also assist Governments in the preparation of a human development strategy for the 1990s.

60. UNICEF is collaborating with WHO, UNFPA, UNESCO and ILO in the development of a set of social indicators, including indicators on school enrolment and achievement, and literacy rates, which fall within the goals of the International Development Strategy. In this connection, UNICEF points out that the analysis of data in the social sectors should not become just an element for the design of policy for the social sectors but also, in conjunction with standard economic data, an element for the design of macroeconomic policy. Further, in order to monitor social progress, countries need to be able to count upon appropriate mechanisms for the timely collection, analysis and dissemination of data.

2. United Nations Development Programme

61. In fulfilling its mandate to assist developing countries in building their national human development capacity, UNDP takes a two-pronged approach: (a) it supports programmes and other initiatives for putting people at the centre of the development process, including efforts in education, grass-roots participation, science and technology, and integration of women in the development process; and (b) it provides technical cooperation to strengthen or create national development capacity, both individual and institutional, in all development areas of relevance in order to achieve development goals and objectives.

62. In order to assist Governments in developing a comprehensive perspective on human resources development, UNDP supports two initiatives: (a) preparation of an annual series of Human Development Reports which provide a means for the exchange of information on ideas and experiences for promoting human development; and (b), as a follow-up to the Reports, the preparation and implementation of comprehensive human development country strategies which require the integration of inter-agency efforts since these strategies are of a multisectoral or cross-sectoral nature. The Reports and the strategies and occasional human development country assessments usually focus on one specific issue, while at the same time considering linkages with other relevant areas of concern. The first Report dealt with human resources development, while the second dealt more specifically with financing human development. 27/

63. UNDP assistance in human development encompasses diverse activities, directed towards such objectives as poverty alleviation, NGOs and community participation, integration of women in development, small credit schemes, science and technology, basic education, human survival and health, and combating the AIDS epidemic.

3. International Labour Organisation

64. The ILO's main thrust is towards increasing the efficiency of national vocational training systems and of skilled manpower in national priority sectors. Its assistance covers training institutions at the national, local or sectoral levels. The vocational training programme addresses problems of rural populations, the informal sector and disadvantaged groups such as women, unemployed rural youth, refugees and older workers. Similarly, the programme promotes comprehensive national training policies by assisting in updating training systems and improving their efficiency and effectiveness.

65. In observance of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, ILO's activities aim at furthering equal opportunities in training and employment for disabled people.

66. Other areas of special concern include technical assistance to African countries for strengthening the technical and research skills of people concerned with vocational rehabilitation; the launching, in 1991, of an international programme for the elimination of child labour; and continued provision of advisory services in project formulation in the fields of employment and manpower planning, and labour and population.

4. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

67. FAO assists in improving the ability of rural populations and farming communities to help themselves through education, extension and training activities, and through encouraging primary producers to be active in the agricultural transformation process.

68. FAO's technical assistance programme includes the development of local knowledge and technology, the strengthening of national staff and institutions and promotion of the use of local resources and facilities. As appropriate, use is also made of other training methods and materials, modern communication technologies and microcomputer facilities.

69. Women and rural youth are also main target beneficiaries, in addition to small farmers. These groups are assisted through leadership training and non-formal education activities.

70. Activities under the regular programme include group training, fellowships, study tours and institution building. Beneficiaries of training activities are decision makers, planners and local managers, educators/trainers, technical specialists, field extension/training personnel and also primary producers. In 1989, approximately 105,000 people received training and close to 3,000 fellowships and study tours were awarded for advanced degree programmes or specialized training. In addition, over 200 agricultural projects reached a considerable number of farmers.

71. Rural women are increasingly benefiting from field training activities. Women trainers have increased, from 10 per cent of the total in 1982 to 29 per cent in 1989. Rural youth receive training in agricultural leadership qualities and technical know-how.

72. Rural populations participate in all aspects of the execution of projects, from project identification to evaluation. People also participate in the setting up and daily operation of administrative, social and economic institutions, such as cooperatives.

73. The aim of the Tropical Forestry Action Programme is to increase national capacities through community forestry programmes which include extension, education and training activities.

74. Following the strategy adopted by the 1984 FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, training, workshops, preparation and distribution of guidelines and training materials, as well as exchanges of experience in fisheries management and development, are conducted so as to reach officials at various levels of government and other beneficiaries in the fisheries sector.

75. FAO works with community-based and/or non-governmental organizations in expanding people's participation in agricultural development programmes, agricultural extension, education and tra_ning. NGO activities to support national government policies, strategies and programme activities take place under the coordination of concerned government agencies or institutions.

76. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development is the principal inter-agency mechanism through which FAO interacts with other United Nations agencies on matters related to human resources development. Through the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Agricultural Education, Science and Training, FAO, UNESCO and ILO work closely on rural education and training.

77. FAO maintains close relations with UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Development Fund for Women on operational activities related to programme and project implementation. Similarly, FAO works closely with UNDP as executing agency for UNDP-funded projects. Approximately 30 per cent of these projects have a significant human resources development component. In the area of population education, UNFPA's funding has continued to grow. Regular consultations with the World Bank and regional development banks continue in areas such as investment issues associated with agricultural extension, education and training, as well as with UNEP, UNESCO, WHO and UNFPA on environmental education and training issues.

5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

78. Education and science are fundamental to sustaining the development process in the long run; indeed human development is rooted in education and culture. UNESCO's activities in human resources development are concentrated on basic education, higher education and scientific and technical training in the natural and engineering sciences. UNESCO also has a major programme entitled "UNESCO's contribution to prospective studies and to strategies concerned with development" dealing with human resources development. Under this programme specialists in development receive training assistance, inter alia, on: (a) strategies and options of human resources development in sustainable development; (b) the role of the cultural dimension of development in development programmes and projects; (c) the integration of policies of development and the preservation of the environment at the local and international levels; (d) the role of prospective studies in the formulation and implementation of development projects; and (e) institutional innovations in favour of development.

79. Within the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development, development plans will consider socio-cultural factors. UNESCO also assists countries in strengthening their national capacities in public administration for development, and in identifying and preparing cooperation projects in UNESCO's fields of competence.

6. World Health Organization

80. WHO stresses the need for developing countries to obtain the types and numbers of health personnel that they require and can afford in order to implement their national strategies for achieving health for all. It assists in meeting the needs for health personnel who are competent in the areas of science, techniques and management and are able to provide optimal inputs for the general goal of Health for All.

81. WHO concentrates on building up human resources to make national activities and services self-sustainable. Approximately half of the regular budget for human resources supports the provision of fellowships, including training in research, especially in tropical diseases, human reproduction and, to a lesser degree, in AIDS.

82. Attention is also paid to reinforcing training institutions, improving educational methodology and developing a health learning materials programme.

83. WHO continues to investigate the economics of the health workforce. Improved management of the health workforce focuses on employment conditions, career development and continuing education to ensure long service and the expansion of knowledge, skills and productivity.

84. The idea of "leadership development for health for all" rests on the premise that "leaders" can best speak on behalf of the health sector. Nurses and women health workers can develop these leadership roles. For this purpose, WHO is collaborating with national centres for nursing development to help reorient curricula, improve information systems and develop nursing leadership.

85. Since medical education is rapidly changing, WHO collaborates with centres and non-governmental organizations in developing assessment tools for rapid situation analysis and monitoring of these changes. Educational approaches such as problem-solving in basic, post-basic and continuing education is stressed for health professionals.

86. To assist in increasing the number of teachers and materials, the Interregional Health Learning Materials Programme conducts technical meetings and workshops and develops technical publications. Some 30 developing countries participate in the production of materials adapted to local conditions through collaboration in joint research, exchange of staff and training, and sharing of teaching and learning materials.

7. World Bank

87. In the decade of the 1990s, the World Bank expects to centre its development strategy on investments in human resources. Commitments for human development lending have already increased from 2.8 per cent in 1987 to 11.7 per cent of total commitments in 1990. Efforts will be focused on education, population, health and nutrition and women in development.

88. In the field of education, lending over the next three years will reach more than $1.5 billion a year. During 1990, lending for education was over $1 billion, and 40 per cent of some 21 projects was directed to the improvement of primary and secondary education. Several of these projects stress increasing the participation of girls in schooling.

89. A framework to support primary education includes measures to enhance the learning environment, prepare and motivate teachers and strengthen institutions in charge of national education systems. The framework will stress the need to make education more readily accessible to all the population, to reinforce the financing of primary education and to increase assistance from bilateral and multilateral donors, including the World Bank.

90. The World Bank has increased its lending related to population, health and nutrition objectives in 1990 by approximately 70 per cent above the 1989 total lending of $550 million. Health projects comprised about two thirds of the total but it is expected that population and nutrition projects will account for an increased portion of lending.

91. The World Bank also contributes to sectoral programmes such as Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, Onchocerciasis Control, Human Reproduction,

Safe Motherhood, the Task Force for Child Survival, Global Programme on AIDS, and the United Nations ACC's Subcommittee on Nutrition.

92. In the area of women in development, efforts focus on increasing economic productivity and income. Priority areas include secondary-level education, protection of motherhood, including family planning and health care, agricultural training, opening of credit opportunities and support for women entrepreneurs and ensuring access to labour markets. Following the World Bank's objective to integrate women into the mainstream of its activities, 43 per cent of 1991 projects contain elements related to women in development. The World Bank's country-specific assessment and action plans will continue to assess women's potential role in national development, including policies affecting welfare and productivity and institutional impediments to progress.

8. International Monetary Fund

93. The primary mandate of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is not in human resource development. It supports the efforts of its developing member countries to promote high-quality growth which can enable them to achieve a significant improvement in their human resources. The structural adjustment programmes supported by the Fund are intended to improve the efficiency of resource allocation, thus helping countries to secure resources for nutrition, health and education programmes. However, reform programmes may cause, in the short run, a reduction in the already low standard of living of the poor and it is therefore essential that they include measures to protect the poorest and ensure their ability to live a productive life. For these reasons, the Fund cooperates with countries in designing and financing social security nets to protect the most vulnerable groups of the population.

B. Agency suggestions for improved coordination of human resources development activities

94. The period since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 45/191 is short. However, the different parts of the United Nations are in the process of implementing the objectives of the resolution.

95. The organizations collaborate closely, particularly in terms of specific objectives, such as in the preparation of the Human Development Reports under the auspices of UNDP. Operational activities are coordinated where agencies perform as executing agencies funded by particular organizations. For example, the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Agricultural Education, Science and Training reviews the joint work of FAO, UNESCO and ILO on rural education and training activities, and the ACC Task Force on Rural Development deals with human resources development activities of the various organizations of the United Nations system.

96. A few organizations offered suggestions for improved coordinative work in respect of human resources development. Most of these suggestions refer to coordination in policy-making and overall strategy rather than to concrete coordination in the field. UNESCO indicated that ACC, when dealing with development and international economic cooperation, should review as often as possible the coordination of activities of the United Nations system in human resources development. Similarly, the ACC Task Force on Long-Term Development Objectives could be invited to undertake a study and present a report with recommendations for consideration by ACC.

97. Further, UNESCO considered that greater inter-agency collaboration should lead to ensuring that public policies reinforce a health-supportive environment. In this regard, the United Nations system could assist in disseminating knowledge on options to achieve healthy lives through life styles and personal behaviour choices.

98. UNDP referred to the coordinating work already in progress for preparing the Human Development Reports. The organizations of the United Nations system contribute to these efforts with slight variations depending on the main theme of the report. The Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) [CCSQ(OPS)] also performs a coordinating role in reviewing the Reports' findings and policy messages.

99. The ACC Subcommittee on Statistics, the United Nations Statistical Office and agencies such as UNICEF and UNFPA have been instrumental in their initiatives to improve national capacities for the preparation of statistics related to human development. This effort is closely related to the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP), the Critical Poverty Project for Latin America and the Social Dimension of Adjustment project. Another instrument of coordination is represented by the NHSCP process under way in a number of developing countries in which the various organizations are required to provide inputs, including human resources development.

100. As regards increased coordination, UNDP drew attention to the following needs:

(a) To reach a proper definition of human resources development and of the main objective of people's active participation in development;

(b) To promote comprehensive, integrated country strategies for human development. Country profiles and strategies which consider the need of individual countries should assist Governments in the planning and budgeting process while also facilitating donor coordination and resources availability. This approach is already under way in some 20 countries and may require evaluation and assessment;

(c) To create modalities for encouraging not only expertise-building but also the proper utilization of new entrants in the workforce, at all levels, and the avoidance of outmigration and leakages of qualified people; and

(d) To monitor activities of the United Nations system in support of human resources development objectives. A report on United Nations action for human resources development at the mid-point of the Fourth Development Decade should provide information on the coordination of activities related to human resources development.

IV. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES: THE ISSUES OF EFFECTIVENESS, COORDINATION AND INTENSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES

A. Effectiveness of operational activities

101. The experiences of the United Nations organizations have proved the effectiveness of joint efforts. Several success stories can be told in support of this type of cooperation between the United Nations organizations. Examples include: a joint UNDP/FAO project in Adidwan, Ghana, for the eradication of poverty by promoting and diversifying women's involvement in economic activities; a number of UNDP/ILO projects with a similar purpose but implemented by creating economic opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs in Bolivia, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras; and UNESCO/UNDP and WHO/UNDP joint programmes for the prevention and control of AIDS in Bangladesh and Thailand. 28/ The results of these joint efforts have been quite encouraging.

102. Another way to increase the effectiveness of United Nations activities is to support the work of non-governmental organizations, especially local non-governmental organizations, in projects and programmes in the area of human development. An example of the successful participation of non-governmental organizations in United Nations activities has been UNDP's Partners in Development Programme which gives small grants to non-governmental organizations, especially for grass-roots income-producing activities. 29/ Taking into consideration that non-governmental organizations are closer to people and more aware of specific conditions in a particular area than government agencies, UNDP has been providing expertise and funds to involve those organizations in implementing small local schemes either on their own or jointly with a government agency.

103. In general, cooperation with non-governmental organizations has many advantages. Through collaboration with non-governmental organizations, the needs of a targeted group in a certain area of a country-beneficiary can be determined more precisely and specific conditions taken into consideration. Potential risks and losses are lowered, and potential benefits increased, by the involvement of non-governmental organizations and local government institutions.

104. Direct participation of the local population is another way to ensure that a project will benefit a targeted group. Participation of the people in designing or adjusting and executing the project which aims at changing their lives will make this project more psychologically acceptable because all specific cultural, economic and other factors, have been taken into account.

B. Intensifying cooperation

105. One major precondition for good cooperation is that the political will and commitment of the members of the international community must be present. Once this condition is met, more technical aspects can be discussed. This is borne out by all post-war experience in international cooperation.

106. The international community has reached at least verbal consensus on the need for more decisive steps to eradicate poverty, hunger, homelessness and other social ills.

107. One source of preoccupation in many developing countries is that the new approach to development might result in further conditionalities imposed by aid donors and development-financing institutions - conditionalities involving such matters as political reform, explicit support for private entrepreneurship, trade liberalization and environmental protection.

108. One lesson learned from attempts to make development financing conditional on policy reforms has been that it fails in its purposes when Governments pay lip-service to policies to which they are not genuinely committed. Conversely, if they are committed to them, conditionalities seem superfluous. An effort should be made to think less in terms of conditionalities and more in terms of an improved aid relationship founded on mutual trust and shared objectives.

109. The United Nations may contribute to the process of confidence-building by organizing ad hoc meetings and consultations of the parties concerned. In this respect, the established procedures being used successfully by UNDP - particularly round tables, conferences and consultations - which allow the recipient countries to participate on an equal footing with the donors in deciding on the priorities to be set and on the distribution of resources, and other similar multilateral arrangements under the United Nations umbrella could be of more frequent and wider use by United Nations organizations.

110. The United Nations may also assist the members of the international community in identifying critical social areas and problems which need to be addressed on an emergency basis.

111. Mobilization of world-wide public support for the efforts of the United Nations in the area of human development should be intensified by the widespread dissemination of information. Most Member States have suggested that a social summit might be an effective way to attract public attention and to mobilize private initiative and resources for a concerted international attack on poverty.

C. Availability of resources for financing the United Nations activities in the area of human development

112. Most United Nations organizations have been providing assistance to the poorest developing countries, which are their main beneficiaries. In 1989, 46 per cent of all concessional development assistance was designated for the least developed countries (A/46/206/Add.1, para. 6).

113. The sectoral distribution of grant-funded development assistance, provided by United Nations organizations, evidences that health and agriculture/forestry/fisheries have been the sectors of primary concern. Their combined share in total grant-funded development assistance was 43 per cent in 1989 (ibid., para. 11, table B.6). However, the financial support for population and general development programmes and projects was also relatively large, about 13 per cent of total development grants. The grants for education and science and technology in 1989 were small, each being 3 per cent.

114. The total contribution of United Nations organizations in the educational process of developing countries has not been limited to the provision of direct grants for education. Many United Nations organizations have assisted the educational process in developing countries in training, technical cooperation and the provision of consultants for projects funded by loans and credits. It is estimated that, when these expenditures are included, total United Nations system technical cooperation expenditures in 1989 were $3.8 billion (ibid., para. 12). The main organizations responsible for distributing and administering the funds provided for technical cooperation were the World Bank/International Development Agency (IDA), UNDP, extrabudgetary funds, UNICEF, regular budget and UNFPA.

115. Contributions from Governments and other sources to the system's operational activities for development and other assistance programmes rose by 30 per cent between 1986 and 1989 - from $7.25 billion to $9.42 billion (A/46/206, pp. 10 and 32). Contributions for operational activities alone - i.e., excluding such matters as assistance to refugees and disaster relief and the UNEP Environment Fund - rose by a similar amount - from $6.57 billion to $8.57 billion. However, between 1988 and 1989 the increase in contributions was less than 4 per cent.

116. Contributions to specialized and equivalent agencies of the United Nations system (ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, International Trade Centre, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Telecommunication Union, World Meteorological Organization, International Maritime Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, Universal Postal Union, World Intellectual Property Organization and others) in 1989 were $0.11 billion above the level of 1986, having risen from $0.75 billion in 1986 to $0.86 billion in 1989. Contributions to the UNEP Environment Fund also increased during the same period from $0.03 billion to $0.04 billion.

117. At the same time, between 1986 and 1989, there has been a substantial increase - from $2.33 billion to $3.10 billion - in contributions to UNDP and its administered funds and trust funds, to UNFPA, UNICEF, World Food Programme and some other United Nations funds. The World Bank Group and the International Fund for Agricultural Development have also enjoyed an increase in contributions: from $3.49 billion to $4.61 billion.

118. The future course of contributions is problematic. Although some donor countries have expressed their readiness to commit more resources in support of developing countries' efforts in developing human resources, the financial situation in many donor countries is not likely to allow a significant increase overall in resource inflows to organizations of the United Nations system. It appears that the main emphasis will have to be on making development assistance more efficient and effective in terms of its impact.

119. The results of the meeting of the UNDP Governing Council, held at Geneva in June 1991, indicate that donor countries want the United Nations organizations to concentrate their efforts on building national capacity in several specific areas: poverty eradication through grass-roots participation in development; environmental protection; management development; technical cooperation among developing countries; technology transfer; and the promotion of women in development. In support of these activities, in 1991, donor countries pledged $1.3 billion to the UNDP and its associated funds. 30/

D. Improving the coordination of the United Nations system's operational activities

120. The Charter of the United Nations lays down the broad distribution of responsibilities within the system and the mechanism for monitoring the activities carried out by the United Nations organizations. Many deficiencies in the current functioning of the United Nations system arise from the initial design of the system itself. However, despite frequent criticism of the system, Member States appear to be reluctant to introduce institutional changes.

121. At the higher level, coordination of the organizations of the United Nations system is carried out through the ACC machinery which includes a considerable number of task forces, many of which deal with issues related to human resources development. These task forces serve as channels for sharing information among the United Nations organizations and coordinating their activities. For example, through the Subcommittee on Nutrition, close cooperation between FAO, WHO and other United Nations agencies that are members of the Inter-agency Surveillance Programme takes place through implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on Control of Vitamin A Deficiency and Nutritional Blindness and the joint FAO/WHO/UNEP Food Contamination Monitoring Programme.

122. The ACC Task Force on Rural Development, chaired by FAO, is working on the effects of structural adjustment programmes on the rural poor. One of the

functions of this Task Force is to provide a forum for the discussion of inter-agency collaborative activities in the field of rural development. Prime examples of inter-agency collaboration are the multi-disciplinary Inter-Agency World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Policy Missions. The Task Force has organized panels on monitoring and evaluation and on people's participation, and Working Groups on the impact of macro-economic policies on the rural poor and on the industrial contribution to rural development.

123. Concerning women in development, the Division for the Advancement of Women is responsible for inter-agency coordination. In the thematic area of human settlement two agencies, UNDP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, have established a joint Task Force to facilitate technical cooperation for the formulation of national shelter strategies and the execution of projects on housing and related services at national and regional levels.

124. Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the activities of the United Nations organizations has been a function of the governing bodies of the organizations themselves. For example, FAO is obliged to provide progress reports on the implementation of all plans of action, strategies and other agreements involving FAO to its governing bodies (FAO Conference, Council and Committees) at regular intervals.

125. If agencies have a well-established global strategy, e.g. WHO, progress on the implementation of this strategy is monitored and evaluated by the total membership of the organization. Thus, WHO's global strategy for achieving Health for All has been monitored and evaluated every two years by applying 12 indicators. These indicators help establish whether Health for All has received endorsement as policy at the highest official level in each country, and whether primary health care is available to the whole population. Other indicators in the WHO global strategy evaluation framework include the nutritional status of children, infant mortality rate, life expectancy at birth, adult literacy for both men and women, the percentage of GNP spent on health and per capita GNP.

126. As far as the programming of United Nations operational activities is concerned, the global targets of the International Development Strategy, as elaborated by intergovernmental bodies, provide a vision of goals and priorities of the international community in the socio-economic field. They also provide a basis for interorganizational cooperation at the country level, as well as a framework within which the links between technical cooperation and investment, and the subregional, regional and global dimensions of development can be better integrated.

127. National development plans, or policy documents defining national development goals and priorities, constitute the essential framework within which the range of external assistance programmes is articulated. The elaboration of such plans and priorities is the responsibility of the Government. The United Nations system is expected to respond within the

appropriate context. It may actively participate in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national development goals and targets, taking full account of globally determined goals and strategies. In this context, the credibility of national policies and goals is one of the necessary prerequisites for equally credible international support and for more dynamic United Nations organizations' collaboration at the country level.

128. Coordination and cooperation in the field raise a different set of issues which have a long history. Consultative groups set up under the aegis of the World Bank, and round tables organized by UNDP have improved donor coordination, and resident coordinators are intended to facilitate agency coordination at the national level. In order to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations organizations, ACC has recently issued the Guidelines on the Role and Effectiveness of the Resident Coordinator System and the draft Guidelines for Enhancing Programming Processes which were transmitted by the Director-General for Development and International Cooperation to resident coordinators on 16 October 1990. These documents advise the resident coordinator and country teams:

> To mobilize "at the country level the capacities of the United Nations system in ensuring an integrated response in support of Governments; in doing so, particular care must be taken to mobilize the significant capacities of financial and technical organizations without representation of their own at the country level";
>
> To establish "as required, inter-agency advisory teams around substantive themes, led by the agency most directly involved";
>
> To examine "the intersectoral implication of the sectoral goals established for each country. For this to be carried through meaningfully, it is important that sectoral goals are quantified, especially as they concern the next two to three years";
>
> To ensure "the mutual consistency of sectoral goals in terms of the demands the fulfilment of these goals would make on the 'most scarce resource', which is likely to be the availability of finance or 'savings' (both domestic and external)"; and
>
> To earmark and, as required, to mobilize "additional resources for undertaking the work implicit in the above, especially in regard to sectoral studies, analyses and the quantification of targets". 31/

129. These and other efforts of ACC to strengthen coordination of the United Nations system's activities illustrate a long and ongoing effort to meet the recognized needs of improved coordination in general, which also applies to activities in human resource development. 32/

130. Naturally, each agency gives priority to its particular concerns and strives for greater recognition of its objectives. This is sometimes a form of invigorating competition which should be welcomed even if it produces some apparent duplication and overlapping.

131. The responsibility of Member States, most of which are simultaneous members of the governing bodies of several United Nations organizations, is to ensure a common thrust towards a joint objective, cooperative ventures and cooperative exchange of views and information between the United Nations organizations.

132. Within the United Nations system it will be useful to develop further networks which enable programme managers to keep in touch speedily and directly. A new technology for quick electronic mail and other means of communication is available; some progress has been made through the Advisory Committee on the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) in recent years.

133. The rapid advances in communications are but one facet of the rapid technological progress. The different specialized agencies are best equipped to keep pace with such advances and to adjust their programmes and projects to meet emerging needs. The present need is not so much to aim for some ideal of unified coordination and planning of the system's activities, which could raise the problems inherent in central planning, but to make the system more flexible and responsive to emerging requirements. The optimal level of coordination is one which is achieved at the minimum cost in terms of time and effort and which makes the varied work of the system in the field of human development more effective and efficient. It should be one in which coordination is area-specific and extremely flexible.

Notes

1/ See the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Development Cooperation Information Department, A World of Difference: A New Framework for Development Cooperation in the 1990s (The Hague, March 1991), p. 40.

2/ General Assembly resolution A/45/199, annex, paras. 7 and 15.

3/ See, for example, The United Nations in Development: Reform Issues in the Economic and Social Fields, A Nordic Perspective (Final Report of the Nordic United Nations Project), 1991.

4/ Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance, Common Responsibility in the 1990s (Stockholm, Sweden, The Prime Minister's Office, April 1991).

5/ Ibid., p. 22.

6/ The report stated that "there is evidence that the fastest-growing countries in a given period and within a given per capita income group typically had higher than average levels in the development of human resources (especially in education) at the beginning of the period. Large investments on human resources also tended typically to speed up growth performance in comparison with periods preceding such investment" (The Challenge to the South, report of the South Commission (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 101).

Notes (continued)

7/ Ibid., p. 264.

8/ For a recent analysis of the implications of the broad acceptance of the market-based development model, see A World of Difference ..., pp. 57-58.

9/ Ibid., p. 140.

10/ "It is (the effort of individuals, by their universal, continual, and uninterrupted effort to better their own condition), protected by law and allowed by liberty to exert itself in the manner that is most advantageous, which has maintained the progress of England towards opulence and improvement" (Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations (1776), book II, chapter III).

11/ "Great nations are never impoverished by private, though they sometimes are by public, prodigality and misconduct ... The whole, or almost the whole public revenue, is in most countries employed in maintaining unproductive hands. Such are the people who compose a numerous and splendid court ... great fleets and armies" (ibid., book II, chapter III). "No two characters are more inconsistent than those of trader and sovereign" (ibid., book V, chapter II, part I).

12/ The Policy Statement is given in OECD, Development Cooperation in the 1990s: 1989 Report of the Development Assistance Committee (Paris, 1989).

13/ OECD, Development Cooperation 1990 Report (Efforts and Policies of the Members of the Development Assistance Committee) (Paris, 1990), p. 143.

14/ Ibid., p. 144.

15/ A World of Difference ..., pp. 145 and 283.

16/ See The Asian Development Bank in the 1990s, January 1989.

17/ In future, priorities in the area of education will include: expansion and strengthening of adult literacy and primary education programmes, particularly for women; development of structural reforms of technical and vocational education, where necessary; expansion and upgrading of higher-secondary and post-secondary education; assistance in rectifying those cases of extreme imbalances of resources distribution in the education system and in reviewing the cost-effectiveness of the system as a whole; and development of education policies and strategies suitable to small island and archipelagic countries, including small land-locked countries.

18/ UNDP, Human Development Report 1990 (New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 14-16, 109 and 128-129.

19/ UNDP, Human Development Report 1991 (New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 8-9.

Notes (continued)

20/ Ibid., pp. 70-74.

21/ World Bank, World Development Report 1990. Poverty (Washington, D.C., Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 51.

22/ World Bank, World Development Report 1991. The Challenge of Development (Washington, D.C., Oxford University Press, 1991).

23/ World Bank, World Development Report 1990. Poverty ..., pp. 56-74.

24/ See, for example, Report on the World Social Situation 1989 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.IV.1).

25/ This information was provided by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

26/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), para. 129, and E/CN.3/1991/20, para. 4.

27/ UNDP, Human Development Report (New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, May 1990 and May 1991).

28/ UNDP, 1990 Annual Report, produced by UNDP, Division of Information (May 1991), pp. 11 and 17-18.

29/ Ibid., pp. 13-15.

30/ UNDP, 1990 Annual Report ..., p. 1.

31/ ACC Guidelines on the Role and Effectiveness of the Resident Coordinator System were transmitted by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation to resident coordinators on 16 October 1990. Related draft Guidelines for Enhancing Programming Processes were transmitted to resident coordinators in April 1991.

32/ An Information and Initial Guidance Note for Resident Coordinators and Country Teams on Development Goals and Strategies for 1990s, letter of 25 April 1991 from the Director-General to all Resident Coordinators/Representatives, based on a report of a Task Force of CCSQ(OPS) on "Goals and Strategies for 1990s: Operational Implications of the Fourth International Development Strategy" (ACC/1991/OP/CRP.1), 1 March 1991, as subsequently revised by the CCSQ Secretariat in UNICEF.